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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BEIJING 003312

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y//subject LINE CHANGE//

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/09/2029

TAGS: [OVIP](#) [BURNS](#) [WILLIAM](#) [PREL](#) [MNUC](#) [SENV](#) [PARM](#) [CASC](#)

PHUM, ETRD, MASS, IR, AF, PAK, IN, TW, CH

SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY BURNS' DECEMBER 9, 2009

CONVERSATION WITH CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER YANG JIECHI

BEIJING 00003312 001.2 OF 004

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson. Reasons 1.4
(b,d).

[1](#)1. (SBU) December 9, 2009; 3:45 p.m.; Ministry of Foreign
Affairs; Beijing

[1](#)2. (SBU) Participants:

U.S.

Under Secretary Burns

Amb. Jon M. Huntsman, Jr., Embassy Beijing

David Shear, EAP Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

Laura Rosenberger, Special Assistant to the Under Secretary

Eric Barboriak, Embassy Beijing Political Officer

Meredith Sumpter, Embassy Beijing Political Officer

Ryan Hass, Embassy Beijing Political Officer (notetaker)

James Brown, Interpreter

CHINA

Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Cheng Jingye, Director General, Department of Arms Control
and Disarmament, MFA

Zheng Zeguang, Director General, Department of North American
and Oceanian Affairs, MFA

Shen Yongxiang, Deputy Director General, Department of
International Organizations and Conferences, MFA

Liu Yongfeng, Counselor, Department of West Asian and North
African Affairs, MFA

Shen Jian, Director, Nuclear Division, Department of Arms
Control and Disarmament, MFA

Wu Jianjian, Second Secretary, Department of Arms Control and
Disarmament, MFA

Qian Xinyi, Interpreter

[1](#)3. (C) SUMMARY: In a December 9 meeting with Chinese Foreign
Minister Yang Jiechi, Under Secretary Burns stressed the
importance of coordinated actions on the Iran nuclear issue.
U/S Burns urged China to demonstrate leadership at climate
talks in Copenhagen, and encouraged greater bilateral
coordination to further shared interests in stability and
development in Afghanistan and Pakistan. U/S Burns
highlighted the importance of human rights in U.S.-PRC
relations, and called for the release of AmCit Feng Xue on

humanitarian grounds. Foreign Minister Yang hoped the U.S. would show more support for China's climate change position at Copenhagen, asked for help to press India to show more flexibility toward Pakistan, and stressed the need to prepare thoroughly for any upcoming meetings between Presidents Obama and Hu. FM Yang expressed concern over possible arms sales to Taiwan, particularly of F-16s, China's opposition to a potential meeting between President Obama and the Dalai Lama, and China's concern about tit-for-tat trade remedies. Foreign Minister Yang expressed interest in a quick resumption of the Six-Party Talks and the importance of the bilateral consultation on the G-20 to ensure that it becomes a successful institution. End Summary.

U.S Interested in Results at Copenhagen

¶4. (C) In a meeting with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi December 9, U/S Burns expressed hope that China would demonstrate leadership at U.N. climate talks in Copenhagen, particularly by listing actions that China planned to take in the conference's politically-binding document and by demonstrating transparency in the implementation process that followed. FM Yang responded that China hoped that the United States would show more support for China's climate change position at Copenhagen, bearing in mind that China was a developing country, it was doing its best, and that "quite a few countries" were sympathetic to China's position.

Shared Interest in Stability in South Asia

¶5. (C) U/S Burns stated that the U.S. looked forward to working closely with China to further our shared interests in a stable Afghanistan and Pakistan. FM Yang responded that Chinese leaders used Pakistani leaders' frequent visits to

BEIJING 00003312 002.2 OF 004

encourage the Pakistanis to understand that stability and development were important elements in countering terrorism. Pakistan had paid a heavy price in the fight against terrorism and deserved the international community's support, FM Yang stated. Pakistan's neighboring countries, particularly India, should show more understanding for Pakistan's security needs. Pakistani President Zardari was "very interested" in improving Pakistan-India relations, and China hoped that as a much larger country, India would adopt a more forward-looking, flexible attitude toward Pakistan, FM Yang stated. U/S Burns responded that Indian Prime Minister Singh had just been in Washington, and that the U.S. would continue to encourage both India and Pakistan to improve their bilateral relationship.

Human Rights as Element of Bilateral Relationship

¶6. (C) FM Yang declared President Obama's November visit to China a success and stated that the joint statement issued at the conclusion of the visit provided a comprehensive guideline for the development of bilateral relations in the 21st century. Our task, FM Yang said, was to implement our two Presidents' vision. Presidents Obama and Hu would have many opportunities to meet in 2010, including at two G-20 summits, other summits, and President Hu's visit to the United States. FM Yang stressed the need for both sides to make good preparations for these upcoming meetings. FM Yang noted that the second round of the Strategic and Economic Dialogue would provide an additional chance to open up areas of cooperation.

¶7. (C) U/S Burns responded that the busy bilateral agenda was a positive sign, and noted the importance of dialogue even on issues where both sides did not share a common view, such as human rights, which made the resumption of the Human Rights Dialogue in 2010 of such importance. U/S Burns requested that China consider the release of AmCit Feng Xue on

humanitarian grounds, and noted the President and the Secretary's interest in this case. FM Yang responded that Dr. Xue's case would be decided by an independent judiciary. FM Yang expressed hope for a good human rights dialogue, and commented that he would tell his colleagues to be well-prepared.

Need for Common Efforts on Iran

¶18. (C) U/S Burns stated that China and the U.S. had important shared interests in the stability of the Middle East, and noted that no U.S. president in the last 30 years had gone to as much effort as President Obama to engage Iran. The United States was frustrated that the agreements that the P5-plus-1 had reached with Iran in Geneva had been walked back by the Iranians. U/S Burns explained that the U.S. had sought creative solutions to build confidence with Iran, including on the Tehran Research Reactor proposal, but that Iran's failure to follow through on the understandings reached in Geneva, including on its commitment to meet with P5-plus-1 countries for talks on its nuclear program, had been disappointing. At the end of 2009, U/S Burns explained, the U.S. would have to ask what more we could do to push forward the diplomatic track, and how we should begin to make clear to Iran the consequences of Iran's failure to follow through on its commitments. U/S Burns underscored that U.S.-PRC cooperation on Iran and P5-plus-1 unity had been instrumental, and the adoption of the resolution on Iran at the IAEA Board of Governors had been a very positive step.

¶19. (C) FM Yang agreed that the unified P5-plus-1 vote at the IAEA had sent a firm, clear message to Iran. China hoped the P5-plus-1 could continue to find ways to bring about peaceful settlement of the Iran nuclear issue. FM Yang welcomed the close coordination among the P5-plus-1 Political Directors and emphasized the value of U/S Burns' continuing close contact with Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei. FM Yang stressed that it was very important to maintain stability in the Middle East, while acknowledging that Gulf states were nervous about the possibility of Iran developing nuclear weapons. China welcomed U.S. engagement. While commenting that Iran was currently very unhappy with China, FM Yang emphasized that China would stand its ground.

BEIJING 00003312 003.2 OF 004

¶10. (C) U/S Burns noted that a key risk of Iran's nuclear program was that other actors would draw independent conclusions about how to respond. If the Saudis concluded that Iran was close to acquiring nuclear weapons, they would pursue their own nuclear program. The Israelis were deeply concerned, U/S Burns explained, adding that we could not underestimate the possibility that Israel would reach the conclusion that it could not afford to sit still. FM Yang responded that his last trip to Israel and his meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Lieberman had left the same impression.

PRC Bilateral Sensitivities: Arms Sales, Dalai Lama, Trade

¶11. (C) FM Yang flagged Chinese opposition to any arms sales to Taiwan, particularly of F-16s, and strongly urged the U.S. not to proceed with any F-16 sale. FM Yang explained that China had demonstrated patience and goodwill in seeking to develop peaceful relations across the Taiwan Strait. Taiwan was pushing on some issues that were irritating, FM Yang stated, including joining the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which the PRC opposed. In spite of occasional differences, the cross-Strait atmosphere was improving, and the PRC hoped the United States would be a positive force in this development. FM Yang added that a non-sale of F-16s would be constructive for further cultivation of cross-Strait ties.

¶12. (C) FM Yang noted China's clear opposition to a potential meeting between President Obama and the Dalai Lama. China was also very concerned about trade remedy measures, and hoped to avoid tit-for-tat retaliatory actions. FM Yang declared that U.S.-PRC relations had matured beyond the tit-for-tat stage, and then recounted that in the first ten years of bilateral relations, PRC leaders had thought about China's strategic security vis-a-vis Russia, in the second ten years the focus had been on trade relations, and now the bilateral relationship was anchored in a common effort to jointly address regional and global challenges. FM Yang urged that bilateral issues be discussed quietly in order to maintain for the world the image that the U.S. and China could do business together.

PRC Supports U.S. Engagement with DPRK

¶13. (C) Asked his assessment of North Korea, FM Yang said his involvement in Premier Wen Jiabao's October 5 meeting with Kim Jong-Il had left an impression that Kim Jong-Il paid a great deal of attention to North Korea's relationship with the United States. Kim Jong-Il understood that a brighter future for North Korea depended upon a reasonably stable relationship with the United States. Dialogue with North Korea was never smooth in part because North Koreans were very accomplished negotiators. In spite of this, China hoped for positive results from U.S. engagement with North Korea. China stood ready to explore all options for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks, but first the U.S. needed to bring North Korea back to the Talks. China would do its best to re-start the Six-Party Talks under appropriate conditions, FM Yang concluded.

U.S. Request for PRC Support in Af/Pak

¶14. (C) Asked for details on the status of an international conference on Afghanistan in London in late January 2010, U/S Burns explained that the broad purpose would be for the newly-formed Afghan government to lay out its plan for the future and for the international community to make clear its support for the Afghan government. At the same time, it would be stressed that the Afghan government had to live up to its commitments.

¶15. (C) Asked about the situation on the ground in Afghanistan, U/S Burns stated that conditions were difficult and that the United States understood that adding troops would not on its own solve all of the problems. That was why, U/S Burns explained, the United States had a comprehensive strategy that emphasized security, economic

BEIJING 00003312 004.2 OF 004

development and good governance. China's investment in the Aynak copper mine and its infrastructure projects were very important, U/S Burns stated. FM Yang responded that China's assistance to Afghanistan was intended to serve both Chinese and Afghan interests. The Chinese government urged Chinese companies doing business in Afghanistan to engage with the local population, including through the building of schools, hospitals and power plants in the vicinity of investments, according to FM Yang.

¶16. (C) U/S Burns urged China to use its influence to encourage Pakistan to confront domestic extremists. FM Yang recounted that Pakistan's President visited China every three months. Pakistan's reservoir of goodwill among the Chinese people made it easy for China to provide assistance, since "the people" ultimately decided what type of assistance China could provide to recipient countries, according to FM Yang. U/S Burns responded that the U.S. was providing support for Pakistan's efforts to confront internal extremists, including in Swat, while at the same time providing increased economic assistance as a demonstration of a long-term commitment to Pakistan's development. FM Yang noted that although there

was some opposition to the U.S. within Pakistan, U.S. acts of sincerity would win more and more support over time. U/S Burns noted that the Secretary had recently engaged directly with Pakistanis of all viewpoints, which prompted FM Yang to note that the Secretary's visit appeared to have been very successful.

PRC Call for Consultation on G-20

¶17. (C) FM Yang stressed that it was important to ensure the success of the G-20, and suggested that the U.S. and China consult regularly on the mechanisms and purpose of the institution, particularly in the run-up to the next summit meeting in Canada. FM Yang indicated that the Secretary had interesting ideas about the G-20.
HUNTSMAN